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UNCLAS TORONTO 003086

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

STATE PLEASE PASS GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION  
DOT PLEASE PASS FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: ETRD PBTS PGOV PREL CA

SUBJECT: Bringing Order to the Border: Detroit-Windsor Crossings Prepares for Big Events

Ref: Toronto 2340

Sensitive but Unclassified - protect accordingly.

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY AND INTRO: The Detroit-Windsor border crossings are preparing for a large increase in the volume of passenger traffic heading for special events in Detroit in January and February. Earlier concerns about processing times for buses entering the U.S. for special events (reftel) are reportedly being addressed. However, minor physical infrastructure improvements for the U.S. plaza at the Detroit-Windsor tunnel that would increase passenger processing capacity have been put on hold because the General Services Administration (GSA) lacks sufficient funds. END SUMMARY and INTRO.

¶2. (SBU) Canada's Border Services Agency (CBSA) and U.S. Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) have been working with operators of the Detroit-Windsor Tunnel and the Ambassador Bridge to improve capacity before the 2006 North American International Auto Show (January 14-22) and Super Bowl (February 5) swell the number of people crossing the border from Canada to Detroit.

¶3. (SBU) Though cross-border consultations to improve passenger processing procedures are proving effective, needed physical infrastructure improvements have been stalled by lack of funds, according to our sources. GSA reportedly issued requests for proposals to: (a) conduct a feasibility study about reopening the Detroit Bus Processing area, (b) conduct feasibility studies to maximize U.S. plaza capacity at the Detroit-Windsor tunnel, and (c) run a simulation using Border Wizard software to model cross-border traffic. The bids on the two studies reportedly came in well over GSA's available funding so those projects have been put on hold. In addition, GSA is currently operating on a continuing resolution, so funding is reportedly not available to begin the modeling project. As a result, GSA will not be able to increase the capacity of the U.S. plaza at the Detroit-Windsor tunnel to process bus passenger traffic before the January/February 2006 Detroit events that are expected to prompt a spike in cross-border traffic (NOTE: Please advise if our information is incorrect. END NOTE).

LeCroy